

GUIDE SUPPORT FOR A TUBE BENDING MACHINE

The present invention relates to a guide support for tube bending machines and, more particularly, for tube bending machines that allow the bending of a tube either to the left, in a so-called clockwise direction, or to the right, in a so-called counterclockwise direction.

When bending in a clockwise direction, the bending arm rotates from the right to the left around the bending arm.

When bending in a counterclockwise direction, the bending arm rotates from the left to the right around the bending arm.

In French patent application No. 0118593, in the name of the applicant, was disclosed a tube bending machine having as object the possibility to bend the same tube either to the left or to the right by means of a bending roller mounted to the bending arm.

The tube bending machine described in the French patent application No. 116593 comprises:

- a stationary framework provided along its longitudinal axis with a guide rail on which slides a movable carriage rigidly secured to a bushing that provides through the action of an internal clamping chuck the guiding and the immobilization of a tube for bending, in either a rotational or in a translational motion;
- at one of its extremities a bending head, a bending roller and a bending arm that rotates around the vertical axis XX' of the bending head for the forming of the tube;
- a bending arm provided with a chuck jaw support that travels horizontally in the direction of the bending head, being said chuck jaw support rigidly secured to a clamping jaw that is provided with at least one jaw for the bending of the tube in a clockwise direction and with at least one jaw for the bending of the tube in a counterclockwise direction, which jaws are stationary with respect to each other;
- a bending roller that is mounted on the bending arm and is provided with at least one jaw for the bending of the tube in a clockwise direction and with at least one jaw for the bending of the tube in a counterclockwise direction, being said jaws laterally staggered with respect to each other, and on side and the other of the vertical axis XX' of the bending head;

- a first guide support that comprises at least one jaw for the tight support of the tube at the time of the bending in a clockwise direction;
- and a second guide support that comprises at least one jaw for the tight support of the tube at the time of the bending in a counterclockwise direction.

It can be noticed that the above-described machine comprises two guide supports to effectuate the bending of the tube in a clockwise and a counterclockwise direction, respectively.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention provides for the simplification and the replacement of the first and second guide supports by enabling that bending to be effectuated in clockwise and counterclockwise directions.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention can be built for and installed on any type of tube bending machine.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention comprises at least two guides whose respective recesses are arranged in opposite directions with respect to the position of the tube for bending and two guiding and displacement means for the guides on the bending head.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention comprises an element guided in a horizontal motion on a plate rigidly secured to the bending head and opposite to the guiding means provided with at least two guides parallel to each other.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention comprises an element provided on its upper surface, and following a direction perpendicular to that of the guiding means, with parallel rails of which each interacts with a guide.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention comprises a first guide that is provided with a partially cylindrical recess whose internal diameter depends on that of the tube to be held during its bending between the other jaws of the clamping jaw.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention comprises a second Guide provided with a partially cylindrical recess whose internal diameter depends on that of the tube to be held during its bending between the other jaws of the clamping jaw.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention is provided with guides that are immobilized on the rails in such a manner that their respective recesses are arranged in opposite directions with respect to the horizontal axis of the machine, embodied by the tube.

The guide support in accordance with the present invention is provided with guides that enable to effectuate on the same bending machine either a left, or counterclockwise, bending or a right, or clockwise, bending.

The below description with respect to the attached illustrations, given by way of example but not limitative, allows a better understanding of the invention, its characteristics and the advantages it is likely to offer:

Figure 1 is a perspective view illustrating a tube bending machine comprising the guide support according to the present invention.

Figure 2 is perspective view showing in detail the bending head of the tube bending machine provided with the guide support according to the present invention.

Figure 3 is a perspective view showing in detail the guide support according to the present invention.

Figures 4 to 7 are perspective view showing the different stages of the bending machine in effectuating by means of the guide support, according to the present invention, a bending following a counterclockwise direction, given that the bending arm rotates from the left to the right around the bending head.

Figures 8 to 10 are perspective views showing the different stages of the bending machine in effectuating by means of the guide support, according to the present invention, a bending following a clockwise direction, given that the bending arm rotates from the right to the left around the bending head.

In figures 1 to 3 are illustrated a bending machine 1 of which the stationary framework 2 is provided at one of its extremities with a bending head 3 around which rotates a bending arm 4 for the forming of the tube 5, be it in a clockwise or in a counterclockwise direction.

Opposite the bending head 3 and along its longitudinal axis, the framework 2 comprises a carriage 6 which, depending on the type of the bending machine, can move either towards to or away from the bending head 3.

The carriage 6 comprises fastening means 7 for the receiving and securing of the tube 5 in order to move it horizontally and in a rotational manner around its axis.

The bending arm 4 comprises a grip support 8 that moves horizontally in the direction of the bending head 3.

The bending arm 4 is rigidly secured to a bending roller 9 constituting a fastening device of a clamping jaw 12 provided with at least one jaw 10, 11 of different bending radii.

The clamping jaw 12 is provided on the grip support 8 of the bending arm 4 with at least one jaw 13, 14 for the purpose of interacting with the jaws 10, 11, respectively, of the bending roller 9.

The bending head 3 is provided with sliding means 15, 16 allowing the traveling of the bending head 3 in horizontal and vertical directions, respectively, with respect to the stationary framework 2.

Thus, the bending head 3 can travel actuated by the sliding means 15 in horizontal directions from the left to the right, and inversely, with respect to the framework 2.

Likewise, the bending head 3 can travel, actuated by sliding means 16, following vertical directions from the top downwards, and inversely, with respect to the framework 2.

Depending on the programming of the bending machine 1, the jaws 10, 13 and 11, 14 of the clamping jaw 12 can effectuate, by way of example, the bending of the tube 5 according to different curvature radii in a clockwise direction.

Also depending on the programming of the bending machine 1, the jaws 10, 13 and 11, 14 of the clamping jaw 12 can effectuate, by way of example, the bending of the tube 5 according to different curvature radii in a counterclockwise direction.

Lastly, depending on the programming of the bending machine 1, the jaws 10, 13 of the clamping jaw 12 can effectuate the bending of the tube 5 according to a curvature radius in a counterclockwise direction, while the jaws 11, 14 of the clamping jaw 12 effectuate the bending of the tube 5 according to a curvature radius either identical to or different from the one previously formed but in a clockwise direction.

Between its sliding means 15 and 16, the bending head 3 is provided with a horizontal plate 17 comprising parallel guide rails 18, 19 for the sliding of a guide support 20.

The guide support 20 can travel in a horizontal direction in such a manner as to move towards to or away from the clamping jaw 12 of the bending machine 1.

The sliding of the guide support 20 in direction towards the clamping jaw 12 is disposed on a horizontal plane that is perpendicular, on the one hand, to the one comprising the sliding means 15 for the horizontal displacements of the bending head 3 with respect to the framework 2 and, on the other hand, to the one comprising the sliding means 16 allowing the vertical displacements of the bending head 3 with respect to the framework 2.

The guide support 20 comprises an element 21 provided on its bottom 22 with guides 23 and 24 intended to interact with rails 18 and 19, respectively, of the plate 17.

On its upper side 25 and in a perpendicular direction to that of the guides 23, 24, the element 21 of the support guide 20 is provided with parallel rails 26 and 27 each of which interacts with a guide 28 and 29 in order to allow either the sliding or the immobilization of the latter ones on the element 21.

The guide 28 comprises a recess 30 that can be partially cylindrical whose internal diameter depends on that of the tube 5 which, during its bending, is held between the jaws of the bending roller 9 and of the clamping jaw 12.

The guide 29 is provided with a recess 31 that can be partially cylindrical whose internal diameter depends on that of the tube 5 which, during its bending, is held between the jaws of the bending roller 9 and the clamping jaw 12.

The profile of the recesses 30, 31 of each guide 28, 29 depends on that of the tube for bending that can present any exterior shape.

The guides 28 and 29 interact with the rails 26 and 27 in such a manner that their respective recesses 30 and 31 are arranged in opposite directions with respect to the horizontal axis of the machine 1, embodied by the tube 5.

Thus, the recess 30 of the guide 28 is turned [away] from the side of the bending roller 9 while recess 31 of the guide 29 is oriented in the direction of the clamping jaw 12 when the grip support 8 is positioned at the left of the tube 5.

It can be noted that the number of the guides 28, 29 depends on the number of the jaws 10, 13 and 11, 14 installed on the tube bending machine 1.

It can be noted that the height of the recesses 30 and 31 of the guides 28 and 29 are staggered with respect to each other, this staggering being caused by the position of the jaws 10, 13 and 11, 14 of the clamping jaw on the bending arm 4.

In our example of embodiment, the guide 28 is applied against the tube 5 when the latter is being bent by the jaws 10, 13 of the clamping jaw 12 while the guide 29 is applied against the tube 5 when the latter is being bent by the jaws 11, 14 of the clamping jaw 12.

Under these conditions, the inverted position of the guides 28 and 29 allows to effectuate on the same bending machine 1 either a bending to the left, or counterclockwise, or a bending to the right, or clockwise, respectively.

Thus, with such a design, it can be easily understood that the jaws 10, 13 of the clamping jaw 12 and the guide 28 of the guide support 20 allow a bending of the tube in a counterclockwise direction because the bending arm 4 rotates from left to right around the bending head 3.

On the other hand, the jaws 11, 14 of the clamping jaw 12 and the guide 29 of the guide support 20 enable the carrying out of a bending of the tube in a clockwise direction because the bending arm 4 rotates from right to left around the bending head 3.

In figures 4 to 7 are shown the various bending stages of the tube 5 in such a manner as to effectuate a bending in a counterclockwise direction.

Figure 4 shows the position of the tube 5 inside the jaws 10 and 13 of the clamping jaw 12 to effectuate a first bending. The guide 28 of the guide support 20 is in close contact against the tube 5 so that it is lodged in the recess 30.

Figure 5 shows the bending of tube 5 in a counterclockwise direction by means of the pivoting of the bending arm 4 around the bending head 3. The guide 28 allows the conveyance of the tube 5 that slides inside of its recess 30 due to the rotation of the jaws 10, 13 of the clamping jaw 12.

Figure 6 shows the opening of the clamping jaw 12, that is to say, the distance between jaws 10 and 13 for the release of the bent portion of the tube 5. The opening of the clamping jaw 12 is effectuated by the sliding of the grip support 8

on the bending arm 4 in a tilted position. Next, the guide support 20 travels horizontally on the plate 17 to move away the guide 28 in order to release the tube 5 from the recess 30. Lastly, the carriage 6 causes the tube 5 to advance in order to release its bent portion from the jaw 13 securely fastened to the bending roller 9.

Figure 7 shows the return of the bending arm 4 to its original position prior to the bending of the tube 5. The return of the bending arm 4 is effectuated with the clamping jaw 12 and the guide support 20 in the same position as described in figure 6.

Figures 8 to 10 show the various stages of bending the tube 5 so as to bending in a clockwise direction.

Figures 8 and 9 illustrate the release of the already bent tube 5 from the bending zone due to the displacement of the bending head 3.

First, the bending head 3 travels vertically towards the lower part of the bending machine 1 so that the assembly of the bending head 3, the bending arm 4 and the guide support 20 is positioned below the tube 5 held in the carriage 6 securely fastened to the framework 2.

Second, the guide support 20 travels horizontally on the plate 17 for the guide 29 to be to the right of the tube 5 to be bent.

Third and in a simultaneous manner, the bending arm 4 swings around the bending head 3 in order to move the jaw 14 to the right of the tube 5 while the bending arm 3 moves through the action of the sliding means 15 and 16 to be positioned at the level of the tube 5, the guide 29 and the jaws 11, 14 of the clamping jaw 12.

Figure 10 shows the position of the tube 5 inside the jaws 11 and 14 of the clamping jaw 12 for the carrying out of a second bending. The guide 29 of the guide support 20 is in close contact against the tube 5 for the tube to be lodged in the recess 31.

The second bending of the tube 5 in a clockwise direction is carried out by the swinging of the bending arm 4 around the bending head 3. The guide 29 allows the conveyance of the tube 5 that slides inside its recess 31 because of the rotation of the jaws 11, 14 of the clamping jaw 12.

It can be noted that, because of the position between the guides 28 and 29, the guide support 20 allows to effectuate on a standard bending machine 1 the bending of a tube 5 in clockwise and counterclockwise directions.

It must be further understood that the foregoing description is given only by way of example and that it does not limit in the least the domain of the invention, which must be observed when substituting the details of embodiment described herein by others equivalent ones.